

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend claim 1, as shown below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for forming a metal silicide layer in a self-aligned manner on a source region, a drain region and a gate electrode of a semiconductor device formed on a semiconductor substrate, said method comprising the steps of:

- (A) depositing a cobalt film over an entire surface of said semiconductor device formed on said semiconductor substrate,
- (B) forming a silicidized cobalt film layer on said source region, drain region and said gate electrode by performing a heat treating thereof, and
- (C) etching away an unreacted cobalt film remaining on said semiconductor substrate while leaving the ~~metal silicide~~ silicidized cobalt film layer intact, using as an etching solution an admixture solution consisting essentially of hydrochloric acid, hydrogen peroxide, and water, having relative concentration ratio thereof ranging from 1:1:5 to 3:1:5, at a solution temperature of 25 to 45°C, with an etching time of 1 to 20 minutes.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said silicidized cobalt film layer comprises a silicidized cobalt selected from the group consisting of dicobalt silicide, cobalt monosilicide and cobalt disilicide.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein said heat treating of step (B) is conducted at a temperature of 500°C or higher.

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Claim 4 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 3, and further comprising a Step (D) of heat treating the product resulting from Step (C) at a temperature higher than a temperature of heat treating in Step (B).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein said heat treating of Step (D) is conducted at a temperature of 800°C.

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